

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Christopher B. Burke Engineering, Inc. (CBBEL) was retained by the Marion County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) to help lead the investigation, development, and drafting of the Watershed Management Plan (WMP) for the Lower Fall Creek Watershed. Interest in developing this WMP stems from historical water quality problems associated with the watershed. It is hoped that, through the implementation of this WMP, improved water quality conditions will be realized that will benefit all residents of the Lower Fall Creek Watershed.

The Lower Fall Creek Watershed drains approximately 57,800 acres (90 square miles) of rural, suburban, and urban land in Central Indiana. This land includes portions of Madison County, Hamilton County (City of Noblesville, Town of Fishers), Hancock County (Town of McCordsville), and Marion County (City of Indianapolis, City of Lawrence). The Lower Fall Creek Watershed consists of 6 14-digit Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) watersheds. These include: 05120201110-010, 020, 030, 040, 050, and 060.

**Chapter 1: Introduction** describes the planning objective, process, and participation that are pertinent to watershed planning and management. The watershed planning effort began with the organization of a Steering Committee and Work Groups that assessed conditions in the watershed, examined water quality issues important to the community, and made decisions as to the direction and content of the plan.

**Chapter 2: Watershed Overview** provides details on the watershed as a whole, the land use and land use change, the relationship of groundwater and surface water, as well as a discussion on the impacts of flooding in the watershed.

**Chapter 3: Water Quality Problems, Causes, & Sources** examines and discusses information that describes the current water quality conditions. To help facilitate this planning effort, CBBEL researched and compiled information on past studies and analyzed trends to provide the Steering Committee with a comprehensive picture of water quality conditions in Lower Fall Creek. The Steering Committee determined that sediment, nutrients, and pathogens were to be the focus of this planning effort. Sources identified include:

- Tillage Practices
- Construction and Development Practices
- Streambank Erosion
- Fertilizer Application
- Inadequately Functioning Septic Systems
- Combined Sewer Overflows
- Illicit Connections to the Storm Sewer
- Wildlife and Background Levels
- Stormwater Runoff
- Livestock and Manure Management

In **Chapter 4: Critical Areas** general locations where pollutant sources may be addressed to help preserve and improve water quality conditions in the Lower Fall Creek Watershed were identified. These areas include:

- HEL & PHEL Classified Soils
- Indian Lake Watershed
- Eroded Streambanks
- Golf Courses

- Residential Lakes
- Non-Sewered Developments
- Livestock and Manure Management Areas
- Wellfield Protection Areas

**Chapter 5: Goals and Decisions** outlines specific management actions and recommendations for preserving and improving water quality in the Lower Fall Creek Watershed. Information is also provided for responsible partners, financial and technical resources needed, and an estimated timeframe for implementation of the following:

- Education of contractors and developers regarding Rule 5 and Rule 13 requirements, inspections, and enforcement.
- Stabilization of streambanks within the watershed.
- Development of a Lake Management Plan for Indian Lake.
- Reduction of soil erosion and stormwater runoff from construction sites.
- Creation of an HEL overlay zone.
- Establishment of a signage program to identify active construction sites in compliance with Rule 5.
- Partnering with NRCS and SWCDs to implement BMPs such as conversion to conservation tillage.
- Evaluation of the Development Ordinances to determine the possibility of including LID techniques.
- Preparation of a Wellfield Protection Ordinance for Madison County.
- Encouragement of golf courses to participate in a certification program.
- Integration of LID techniques in new or re-development projects.
- Establishment of riparian buffers.
- Reduction of *E.coli* loadings from the Indiana State Fairgrounds.
- Support for the Septic Tank Elimination Program within Marion County.
- Education to areas outside of Marion County in non-sewered developments.
- Creation of demonstration projects to illustrate good urban development or redevelopment.
- Utilize results of the Social Indicator Survey to develop future education and outreach efforts.
- Host annual “Watershed Awareness” or “Celebrate Fall Creek” day.
- Evaluate land use planning strategies utilizing materials from the Center for Watershed Protection.
- Obtain funding for an Urban Conservationist position.

**Chapter 6: Monitoring Effectiveness** defines how the WMP will be reviewed, evaluated, and updated as a living document into the future.

Additional input was sought from the public. Two public meetings were held to provide a forum and conduit for review and comment on the development of the WMP. Individuals that are interested in learning more about the project or obtaining a copy of the WMP can contact:

Ron Lauster, Director  
Marion County SWCD  
6960 Gray Road, Suite C  
Indianapolis IN 46237  
317-786-1776

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